



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

cases of bubonic plague, in which the disease germ may be discharged, living, with the several secretions of the body, or found in quantities shortly before death in pulmonary oedema. The most dangerous cases are of pneumonic plague on account of the quantities of the bacilli which may be contained in the sputum and which are thrown into the air by coughing, or even in the act of speaking.

The plague germ is received into the lymphatic system of a healthy organism by small unobserved injuries to the epidermis, slight scratches, flea-bites, and the like. In other cases it may be taken in by way of the mucous of the mouth or throat, the conjunctival sack, or the nostrils, or may be taken into the bronchial tubes by way of the respiratory passages.

That these various means of infection from man to man constitute an open door for transmission when an unclean people live in close, dark, and crowded houses is apparent. Where light and air are freely admitted and cleanliness prevails plague finds no soil for an epidemic spread.

Direct or indirect transmission of infection from man to man is not the only means of the spread of plague. Many circumstances in the outbreak and spread of this disease are explained by the fact that animals living in the vicinity of men are attacked by fatal epidemics. *Of these animals rats are the most important, they being in the highest degree susceptible to infection by the abdominal canal. As they have the habit of gnawing their sick or dead fellows, plague is easily spread among them when it has once broken out.*

Plague-infected rats are dangerous not only to their own kind. Their excreta, which contain great numbers of plague bacilli, may easily infect human dwellings, as plague-infected rats generally lose their fear of man and not infrequently die in houses. Mice may play a similar part, if not one as apparent or pronounced.

Subterranean and entirely uncontrollable conditions explain to some extent the apparently spontaneous outbreak of plague, together with its disposition to fix itself in crowded quarters and to persist even after a period of cessation.

If the foregoing considerations meet the demand for an understanding of the nature and propagation of plague, their object will have been obtained. They may be especially useful in demonstrating the first cases of a plague outbreak. It need not be added that the final diagnosis of a plague case should be made only with corroborative statement of medical authorities and on the ground of reliable bacteriological examination.

[Reports to the Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

Report from San Francisco.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., April 10, 1900.

SIR: All proceedings in Chinatown discontinued except ordinary inspections. No suspicious cases. * * *

GASSAWAY,
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.